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Date <b>22.12.2009</b>	Circ. <b>21000</b>	Page <b>12</b>	<b>1 / 1</b>

## Barley commission against adding back foreign material

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*MVG Staff*

The **Alberta Barley Commission** will be moving forward on a resolution lobbying the Western Grain Standards Committee to stop the practice of adding back foreign material to export grain that farmers have already paid to have cleaned.

The resolution was made at the **ABC's** annual general meeting on Dec. 11.

The issue goes to the heart of the inherent risk that farmers face in exporting product, said Matt

Sawyer, the **ABC's** newly-elected chairman.

"The idea is that a buying nation or a company that ... is buying our grain will set tolerance levels of foreign material. If it's four to six per cent (tolerance) and our grain is clean to 100 per cent, well then they want to make sure that they don't give away an extra four to six per cent. It is a money issue for the grain companies," he said.

If the grain is 100 per cent clean but contaminants are added back, it could bar that shipment

from going to a particular market if the contaminants added back don't meet that particular market standard.

"That delays our market access or prevents market access because there's becoming more and more issues today ... of genetically modified contaminants. Farmers are becoming more and more concerned about foreign material is getting added back to clean grain," he said, noting that with new varieties and diseases cropping up and testing now in the parts per billion

instead of the parts per million "these are risks that farmers don't wish to bear."

If the foreign material that is added doesn't meet the standard of the market, another concern the **ABC** has is that it will taint the reputation of growers.

Sawyer said it doesn't make sense for farmers to pay to have product cleaned and then companies add back contaminants prior to shipping, lessening the quality and price that farmers will receive for it.

